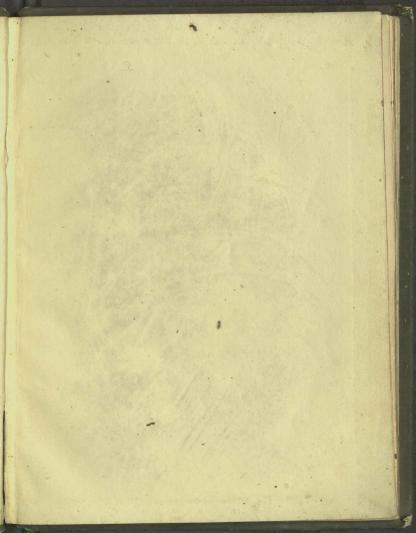


Homo





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FLORA AND POMONA'S FÊTE,

OR THE

BOTANICAL AND HORTICULTURAL MEETING.

A POEM, IN TWO PARTS,

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO THE

FLORAL AND HORTICULTURAL SOCIETIES OF ENGLAND.

BY ELIZABETH STEELE PERKINS.

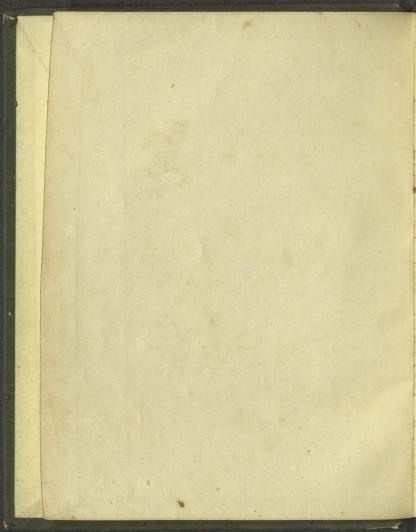
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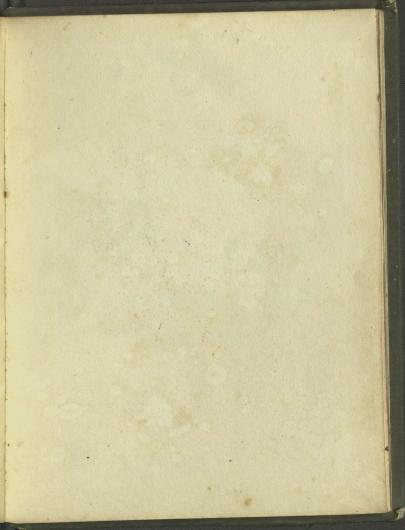
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FLORA'S FÊTE.

Ar the Butterfly's ball and the Grasshopper's fête
There was much to be seen and as much to relate;
But the Beauties of Flora were none of them there,
Tho' kindly they lent their perfume to the air:
The Goddess resolv'd that the insects should find
She deem'd them ungrateful as well as unkind;
Her anger was rous'd, and she vow'd, in her Rose,
No Beetle or Moth that night should repose:
And an order went out to the well-known Blue Bells
To say, they must shut up those little hotels.
Some nettles she took to the Butterfly's bower,
(For she thought he'd return to his fav'rite flower)
And conceal'd them where Roses and Eglantines meet,
To sting with due vengeance, his wings and his feet.

The Rose, she protected with numerous thorns,
And some of her flowers were guarded by horns;
Whilst others she powder'd, in order to see,
Should they dare to receive any insect or Bee.
The Lily, that sweet little belle of the vale,
Then hung down her head and grew pensive and pale;
For she knew that her bank was a fav'rite place
With many of those that were now in disgrace.
Flora car'd not about all the Grasshopper clan,
Cried, "mean little creatures, so trod on by man!
"Both you and the Glow-worm may go home together,
"Like watchmen proclaiming the hour and the weather;
"But since Bayly once said, 'He'd a Butterfly be,'
"That gay rover respects not my subjects nor me.
"Yet all day o'er my flow'rets he flutters his wings,

Now having completed her bus'ness on earth,
When the nettles were placed in the Butterfly's berth;
"Ere the watchman (the Glow-worm) appear'd with his light,

"'And he sleeps in my Rose, when the nightingale sings."

"Or ev'ning gave place to the shadows of night,"

Away! to the Goddess Pomona, she flew, Who was painting some beautiful Fruit, as it grew; Her tale she related, with pitiful tone. And the wrongs of Pomona were join'd to her own; Shall our beauties, she said, in the desert air waste, Because mortals on earth are deficient in taste? Whilst the Grasshopper's feast and the Butterfly's ball Will long be the theme of the great and the small? And the dresses that shone at Sir Argus's rout, (Tho' pawn'd, if not borrow'd, I feel little doubt) Are blazon'd about, as so rich and so splendid! I'm sure we have cause to be hurt and offended: Our colours are bright, and more beautiful too! And I won't be outdone, Great Pomona, will you? New beauties for earth, like new Peers, we'll create, And then let us give a magnificent Fête!! Queen Pomona agreed, and sent invitations To various provinces, kingdoms and nations; And Flora announc'd, they should both meet together On a certain fix'd day, spite of wind or of weather. Horticulture and Botany join'd hand in hand, Was the seal, on the cards, that went out thro' the land.

All the answers arriv'd, and with little delay: A few were engag'd out to dinner that day, But most that were ask'd, were too happy to come, Tho' several regretted they could not leave home. The Apple, as usual, was still in the straw, And her Nonpareil partner had made it a law, That he never would leave her, when that was the case; And the Codlin, of Carlisle, had then a swell'd face. The Bergamot Pear could not travel at all, On account of a bruise he receiv'd in a fall; And a sad invalid was the sweet Chaumontelle, For the climate was cold, and she did not feel well. Old Asparagus too was afraid of the weather, Altho' it was said, that she look'd in high feather: Captains Carrot and Parsnip were living in camp, And suffering much from confinement and damp. Mrs. Artichoke felt quite too old to appear, And Miss Onion was laid on the shelf for the year, Indeed, having often been shunn'd at a rout, She determin'd, in public, no more to go out. Mr. Cabbage detain'd by a tailor at home, Felt great disappointment, that he could not come.

The Turnips were ill, their disease was the fly—
'Twas generally thought, they were likely to die.

Doctor Camomile had a few patients to see,
But would hasten his visits, and drop in to tea.

The Myrtle must go to a marriage that morn,
With the sweet Orange Blossoms, a bride to adorn.

The Rocket engaged to a fête at Vauxhall:

London Pride would have come, but Pride met with his fall.

The Minulus* vowed he'd not go for a bribe,
For a Monkey, they call'd him, or one of that tribe;
And the Sensitive Plant too, had taken offence—
She's apt to be touchy, altho' she has sense.
The Balm was too high her relations to meet,
Because, she had bought Gilead House for her seat,
But should Flora, near Liverpool, visit old Neptune,
She would find at her house, a most cordial reception.
There were several others, gone out, for the season,
And they begg'd to decline, on account of this reason;

^{*} The Mimulus, vulgarly called the Monkey Plant.

But the Goddess, who long o'er the garden has sway'd, Bid many return, and of course was obey'd.

It would take a whole volume, or more, to relate
One-half of the dresses prepar'd for the fête.
What Sunbeams were sent out in every direction,
With colours, with velvets and hats for selection;
What flow'ring, what trimming and spangling too!
And embroid'ring! such as no fingers can do!
Even Carson herself, in her very best day,
Could never compete with old Sol, in this way;
And oft, when some beautiful colour she'd show,
If he peep'd thro' the window, 'twas certain to go!
But she bore all his thieving with very good humour,
Because he made fashions, for Winter and Summer.

On a beautiful morn, in the month of July, When the Sun's golden rays had illumin'd the sky, And dried all the tears and the dew-drops away, Which Evening had shed at the parting of Day,

Queen Flora was seen, to our region descending, The hours, and Summer with garlands attending. In a gossamer car, she was borne from above By the Zephyrs, that fly on the pinions of love; And the trees of the wood, the corn and the rye, All gracefully bent, as the Goddess flew by; Their little red banners, the Poppies unfurl'd, For gladness and joy seem'd to reign in the world. Then the lark rose to meet her, and welcome the day, And the praise of her flow'rets he caroll'd away; He warbled their message of thanks, to the Sun, And begg'd him to shine, till their gala was done: For St. Swithin had come down, the morning before, To christen the fruit, that the Apple-tree bore, And they very much fear'd, if they saw him again, He might sprinkle their beautiful garments with rain.

An Emerald garden the Queen had selected, And thither the car, and the Zephyrs directed, And there, were her Gnomes and old Mercury sent, To stretch out the wings of her elegant tent. Sweet Flora was drest in cerulean blue,
With a cestus of gold and bespangled with dew;
A wreath of wild flowers, which fairies had made,
Encircled her forehead and twin'd in her braid:
And Venus's Looking-glass hung very near,
To make her great beauty more lovely appear;
Her own Crown Imperial lay at her feet,
The Noli me tangere guarded her seat,
And a Dog-Rose was planted just outside the gate,
To frighten intruders away from the fête.

Her chamberlain Zephyrus, then had the honour, To present all the Flowers that waited upon her; Whilst Lavender stood at the front of the door, To keep order, and take all the tickets they bore: And a troop of fine Dahlias placed in a row, On each side of the tent, made a very bright show; The Band was as usual conducted and led By the Trumpeter Woodbine drest out in his red; And under a Flag, looking lanky and taper, Stood Jonquil, to write a report for the paper.

The pride of the Garden, a Rose in full bloom,
Was the first of the guests that now enter'd the room,
Flora started, surprised at such beauty terrestrial,
And dropt from her bosom, her own Rose Celestial;
And so much delight did the Goddess evince,
That she made Miss Rose blush, and she's blush'd ever since.

Lord Geranium came next, and excited much wonder
At the belles that he brought and his family number;
All Lordlings and Ladies and Admirals some!
And Commanders-in-Chief! (but these last didn't come);

The Ladies were lovely, so lowly and bending,
'Twas charming to see such high rank condescending;
Then follow'd the stately Camellia clan,
Who a few years ago, arriv'd from Japan;
Such elegant flowers we rarely have seen,
And their beauty was highly extoll'd by the Queen,
Sir Pyrus Japonica came with 'em too;
A Campanula follow'd as usual in blue.
A red-headed Coxcomb—a rude, forward fellow!
Next push'd in his way, before Miss Gentianella;

And a Lily from Guernsey came after him stalking. And lean'd on a stick, as if tir'd of walking. A Cactus in pink, then appear'd in her pride, With Speciosissimus close to her side: And the Crassula bringing her choicest perfume, With the Heliotrope, perfectly scented the room. The single Rose Briar came in with Sweet Pea. And they felt some attachment, one plainly might see; But Major Convolvolus clung to Miss Rose. To whom he is partial, as ev'ry one knows. The Panseys, in deep purple velvet, were drest. With bright yellow satin composing their vest. They used to be reckon'd quite vulgar and mean, But are now, in good company, constantly seen. A Rose and a Shamrock and Thistle invited, Came, like three loving sisters together united; The Clarkia, Eschscholtzia, and Salvias follow. With Daphne, who's said to have fled from Apollo. Then, a nymph, drest in scarlet, the pretty Verbena, 'Twas her first coming out, in Fashion's Arena, She was thought very charming, and much more refin'd Than the Belle of the City, where Becket's enshrined,

Who was next usher'd in with some more of her order, The band playing "Blue Bonnets over the border." The Pale Primrose for once had deserted her glade, Where retiring and modest she blooms in the shade. The Violet had left the green bank, in the woods, And the great Water Lily, her throne on the floods. From Lincolnshire's fens, came the Marsh-loving Mallow; From her Palace of Crystal the wonderful Aloe! Some would not believe it and many felt doubt. For not twice in a century will she come out.* Sir Buck-bean was call'd from his peaceful retreat, On the Banks of the Lakes is his fav'rite seat-He came up by water (objecting to steam), And his green boat was row'd by the Sun's pilot Beam. The Ericas were summon'd to leave the lone wild Where neglected they liv'd, and in solitude smil'd, And deck'd in new colours look'd lovely and gay. And by far the most beauteous belles of the day. Their neighbour the Gorse, who is rich we are told, Came with them, and wore his best doublet of gold;

^{*} The Aloe flowers but once in a hundred years.

Now greatly preferring the Court to the Dingle. He vows that no longer he means to be single.† Then the Hyacinths followed (the pride of the Dutch), The Illustrious Beauty, and little Nonsuch, The Ranunculas tribe, and Anemonies too In dresses of purple, red, crimson and blue-Narcissus mov'd in with her elegant stoop, In a gold colour'd toque and she sported a hoop; Her dress Soleil d'Or and the garniture round, Compos'd of green leaves, on a very dark ground: In pity, we hope she's not fond of reflexion. As her ancestor was, (she's a sallow complexion). Nasturtium who boasts that he runs very fast Set out after Glycine and found himself last-As the fable relates that the Tortoise by creeping Arriv'd at the goal, whilst the fleet hare was sleeping. Sweet Columbine clad in her usual costume. And the Tulip, as Harlequin, enter'd the room:

[†] The double-flowering Gorse is becoming an universal favourite on Lawns and in Shrubberies.

Cynoglossum, who wore a more delicate hue, And was rather admired, altho' a bas bleu. With a Traveller's joy came the pretty Schizanthus, The Delphinium in white and a Mr. Dianthus: Carnations, Bizarres, and a Pink, like a Fairy, With the Dwarf Marigold and the little Rose Mary. Old Honesty came with the Stocks from their bank : Herb Christopher too, with Sir Lupine Cruickshank. The Amaranth follow'd, still bearing his Plume, And the black ey'd Hybiscus, in beautiful bloom. Then a member appear'd not a Whig nor a Tory, But annex'd to his name is a very old story; Half his dress was of red with the other part white, Vet the colours were blended and seem'd to unite: And he certainly does what no other can do, For he represents York and Lancaster too.* Next came the Blue Doctor, the famous old Squills, Who never gives med'cine, but what he distils; A friend to the bottle, a noted old quack, Who cures the deep cough, and the phthisical hack.

^{*} The York and Lancaster Rose.

The Auriculas, children of April and May, Then approach'd the great Goddess their devoirs to pay. Some were formal and upright and bore a long name, They have Pillars of Beauty and Pillars of Fame; They are Knights, they are Heroes, and Conquerers too. And we constantly hear, of some title that's new. The most noted wore Powder, and those with bright eyes Had just been at a contest and borne off the Prize. The little Miss Daisies look'd simple and sweet In their small yellow caps, trimm'd with Fringes so neat; Their forms are like Fairies, altho' rustic graces, And the soft smile of Innocence, plays on their faces. Flora gave them that smile when she bid them to grow, And she strew'd them for innocent Childhood below. The Sunflower which sprung from Clytia, they say, Was brilliantly clad by the great Orb of Day; She wore his own colours, she borrow'd his rays, And attached to the Sun, she speaks much in his praise. Tigridia pavonia,* beautiful flower! Came in splendid attire and staid but an hour,

^{*} The Mexican Tiger Flower, only blooms for a few hours.

Then put on her hood and she hasten'd away,
For she deem'd it récherché, to make a short stay.
† Sir Hollyhock rode from a neighbouring thicket,
He had put on his red and forgotten his ticket;
Buthe broughtout the Foxgloves and when they were seen,
A gracious admission was sent from the Queen.
Then came Lupins, Lobelias, sweet Mignonette,
And various others whose names we forget.

The Gum Cistus was mourning, and dropping with dew,
And she sent her excuse by the Cypress and Yew.
Her blossoms were fair—but alas! the poor mother
Consign'd them to earth one after another:
Like many a flower, as pallid and pure,
With beauty too great in this world to endure;
Created in Eden and loving the light,
They droop in a day that is followed by night;
But gather'd by Angels, recover their bloom,
And all that is wither'd, they leave in the tomb.

⁺ The late Master of the Quorndon Pack.

The Snow-drop and Crocus, who shone in their day, Were, somehow or other, gone out of the way; They had both disappear'd, for they each lay in bed, And their neighbours and friends suppos'd they were dead, Till Forget-me-not said, that they bid her remember, To expect them again, the last week in December.

A great many guests from America came, Rhododendrons, Azalias, too num'rous to name; From India, from China, and Africa too, Arriv'd many beauties, that nobody knew.

The Chrysanthemums, Asters, and many, no doubt, Much wish'd to be there, but they were not come out; And they and all others, that now were prevented, Still hoped, for the honour of being presented.

POMONA'S FÊTE.

We must now to Pomona's high temple repair,
For the bountiful Goddess Pomona, was there,
In ethereal robes, which the graces had wove,
And as charming as Venus, the Goddess of Love.
Sol lent her his chariot, the elements brought her
The earth and the air, and the fire and the water!
The Orange and Citron embower'd her seat,
And Vertumnus stood by, with his horn at her feet,
That horn, which he waves at her sov'reign command,
Diffusing rich plenty all over our land;
Royal Foresters stood in detachments around,
And some in the avenues, guarding the ground;
And gales of Ambrosia perfum'd the fresh air,
Whilst Vertumnus announc'd all the names of the fair,

Who eager their dutiful homage to pay Pass'd in rapid succession and splendid array. Queen Pine had the entrée, and came in great state, As befitting her beauty, her rank and her weight; And she also brought with her a certain Black Prince, Who's been very much talk'd of, and often cut since. A large party were present from Strawberry Hill, Where the host had declar'd, ev'ry bed he would fill; The juvenile Keans* were in scarlet attired, And thought sweetly pretty and all much admired; But their cousins, the Wilmots, + look'd truly superb, "P'rhaps a little too large," said an old Bitter Herb; Their aunt Carolinat came in with them too, And the Hero of Battle, § who won Waterloo! The Miss Melons, in number, at least half-a-dozen, Beside Cantaloupe, and his awkward first cousin.

II The Black Prince Pine.

* The Kean's Seedling,

+ The Wilmot's Superb, Strawberries.

t The Old Carolina,

& The Wellington,

Whose name we scarce heard, but believe'twas Pumpkin-(He reminded us much of a great country bumpkin.) The Grapes hung together, and look'd very fine! 'Tis said they inherit their pride from the Vine. And Sir Apricot left his abode at Moor Park, To come to this meeting, by way of a lark. Mrs. Nectarine too, with her pretty smooth skin, Felt most happy, she said, "just to take a peep in," But a titter was rais'd at the sight of her face, For the rouge had been laid too much in one place: Mrs. Peach, tho' so lovely, had painted her cheeks, And on one side, had plac'd, a few singular streaks; Notwithstanding all this, they both look'd very well, And in shape and in goodness were thought to excel. Th' Impératrice Plum came with six little pages, All drest in light green, they were six Master Gages; And her nieces from Orleans, just now in their bloom, Attracted the eyes of the whole of the room. The Cherry, in black for his brother Morello, Who had fallen a victim to brandy, poor fellow! The Gooseberry follow'd, and so did the Fig, And the Raspberry, wearing his very best wig:

Then enter'd the *Currants*, and blush'd very red—
'Twas distressing to see how they hung down the head,
For some of them finding all other trades fail,
Were reduc'd e'en to *rob*, and they now lay in jail!
Very late in the day, came the Lords *Magnum Bonum*,
And because they were *great* much attention was shown
'em—

May their names and their virtues be ever preserv'd, For a title so good was ne'er better deserv'd. The Nuts and the Walnuts both travell'd from Kent, And a neighbour (not ask'd) his best Services sent. The Mulberry meant to have been at the fête, But her dress was not ready, which made her too late.

The Champion Potato from Lancashire came,
Who had challeng'd all England, and not lost his fame:
A fat Cucumber follow'd, in green and in gold,
Seeming somewhat deform'd, and a little too old.
The Bean came from Windsor, and look'd very great,
Because he was living, in regions of state;
Tho'he could not compete with his sisters from France,
Who were train'd to excel in the twirligig dance.

The Mustard and Cress and the Lettuce and Beet, (Accustom'd so often at table to meet,) All travell'd en suite, and Sir Radish forgot, Then he mounted his horse and arriv'd very hot; And after him came looking round and well-fed, Most excellent Cauliflower, with his white head; The report was too true, he was sorry to say, Of his cousin, Miss Broccoli, running away. The Peas arrived late, and assign'd as the reason, They were only just come into town for the season. The Mushroom who long for a cold kept her bed, Was forced to appear with a hat on her head: She seem'd to have started in terrible haste, But when she is drest with most exquisite taste She shows no haut ton-nor ever can do,-For all the world knows, she's a mere parcenu. The Leek came from Wales in his uniform gay The same that he wears, on the jubilee day When he represents Cambria's tutular Saint, And some thought on the whole, that he look'd rather quaint, Don Garlick stood nigh him, a native of Spain, Who loves England so well, where he means to remain.

The Goddess receiv'd all her subjects with grace,
And assign'd to each beauty, her rank and due place:
On her right hand, she seated the famous Queen Pine,
On her left hand, she plac'd the fair fruit of the vine;
The Melons were next to the Grapes, in high station,
And the Peach, and the Nectarine, both in rotation.
She condol'd with the Cherry the loss of his brother,
And to each of her guests she said something or other,
"And hoved they would often in future attend,

- "At the summons that she and Queen Flora would send;
- "For in Summer and Autumn, they meant to unite,
- "Their levees to hold and their subjects invite:
- "And this was the spot, where they purpos'd to meet-
- "'Twas the Goddesses' choice, and a favour'd retreat.
- "Competition for prizes, she said, was their will;
- "Some prizes for beauty and others for skill;
- "And so long as she reign'd over orchard and wood,
- "She would ever promote what is useful and good!"

This speech was receiv'd, with applause by the crowd—For Fruit is most grateful, it must be allow'd!

And the beautiful plants that were under the tent, Immediately offer'd a volume of scent!

Now Flora kept out, from the first to the least, All the Insects that went to the Grasshopper's feast; But the Fly, in a passion determin'd to enter, Was caught, in a gossamer, hung in the centre, Where he buzz'd out invectives the rest of the day, And felt for his rashness, he dearly must pay; Whilst the Gnats, on the Sunbeams, were dancing a reel, Too airy and light, their exclusion to feel. The Bee wanted honey and murmur'd about And wonder'd how flowers could go to a rout: The poor Butterfly droop'd and died the same day, For he fancied "all fair things had faded away:" The Wasp climb'd the window, notorious thief, And sat for awhile unperceiv'd on a leaf, But slily he crept and he bit Lady Grape, And was trod under foot, ere he made his escape! Then the Queen of the Fruit was delighted to see They had murder'd the Wasp, and punish'd the Bee,

And Flora rejoic'd o'er the *Butterfly's* fall, For she hated his pride, and remember'd his *Ball*.

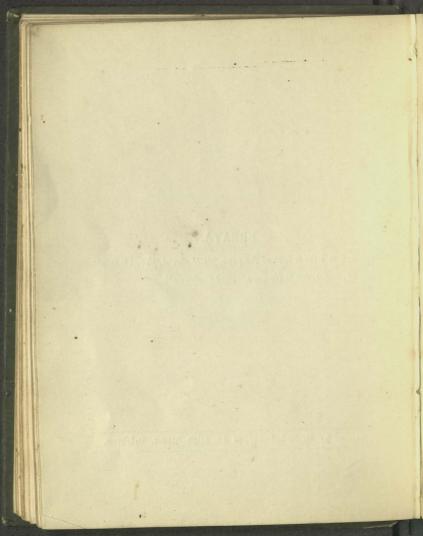
The rest of the day was harmoniously spent-For the Spheres, as a favour, their music had lent, And groups of gay flowers were scatter'd around, Whilst many paraded the beautiful ground; They dane'd in the breeze, looking lovely and sweet, And seem'd to hold converse, delighted to meet, For the language of Flora, e'er speaks to the heart, 'Tis a language of love, which no words can impart. But the Nightshade was caught darting into the room, With his poisonous vapours and poisonous gloom; And the Night-blowing Cereus beginning to yawn, Gave a hint to her friends, that it soon would be dawn; Then they look'd at the Thyme, and they ask'd him to stay; The Old Man shook his head, and he hasten'd away: So the Goddesses summon'd their car and withdrew, And each Beauty returned to the place where she grew.

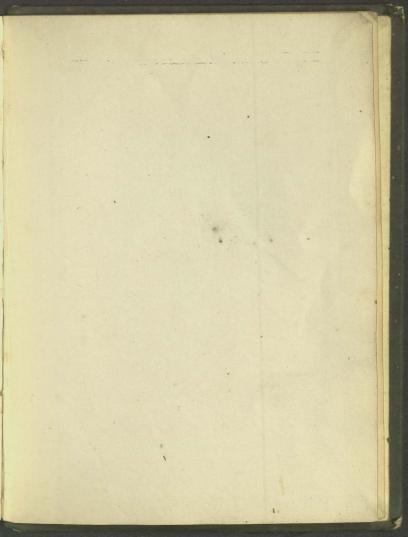
To Pomona and Flora, the theme of our song,
May the Garden, of England, for ever belong,
And their colours be seen by the sceptical eye,
Which no longer the hand of a God can deny.
Let ambition, their seeds, in this Fairy land sow,
Where they'll never be blighted, but prosper and grow.
The Olive is green, and if carefully nourish'd,
The Branch will extend as our Laurels have flourish'd;
For the Sun of Prosperity shines on this land,
And Content, Peace and Plenty should walk hand in hand.
May each Cottager soon find repose at his door,
When the toils of the day, and his labours, are o'er,
Sitting under his Fig-tree, and under his Vine,
As foretold in The Book which is true and Divine.

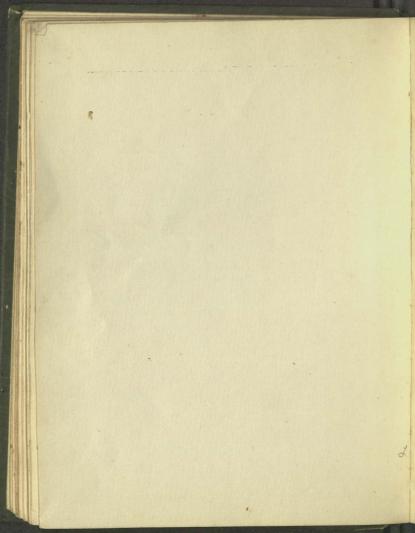


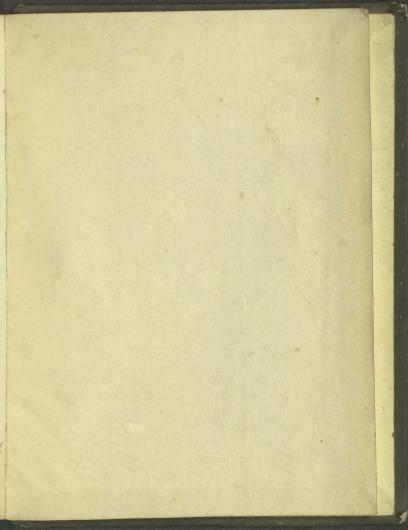
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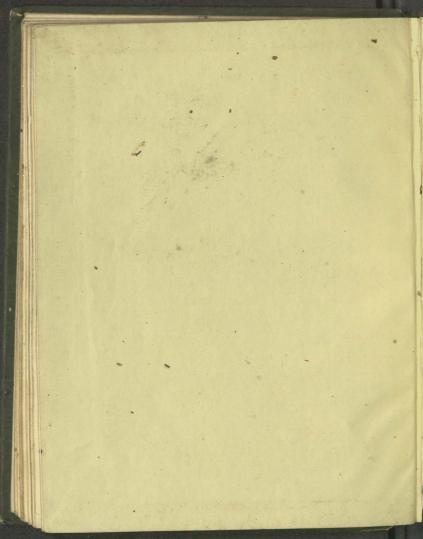
Page 4, line 4 from foot of the page, for "plac'd," read "safe."
Page 14, line 2, for "He vows," read "Avows."











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